

## **Application for Mansard Roof Extension at 5 Mornington Place**

**Application no. 2021/0124/P**

### **OBJECTION**

First of all thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment.

My partner and I would like to object to the proposed mansard at No 5 Mornington Place. We have two kinds of objections:

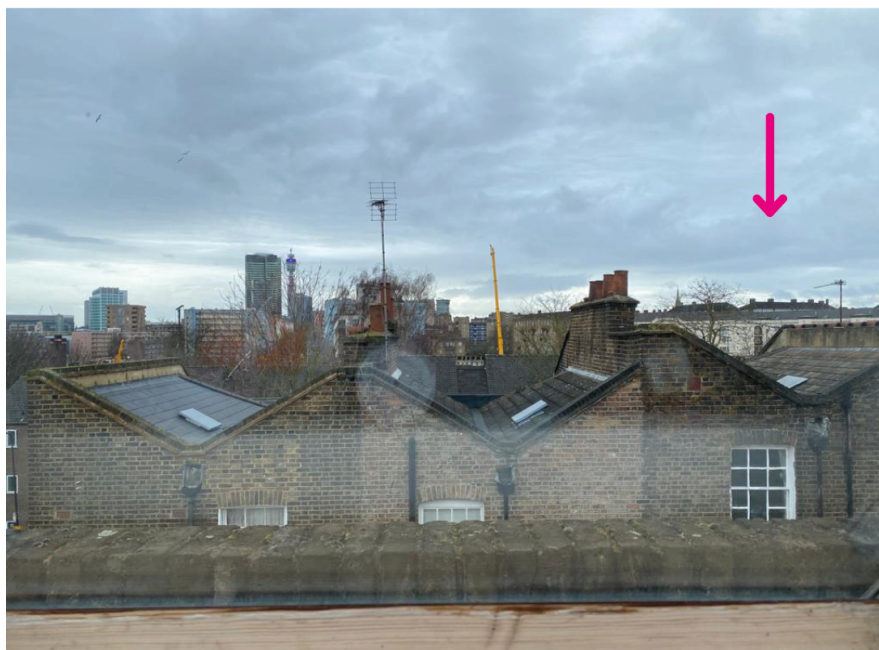
- Objections that relate to how it will affect us directly as immediate neighbours
- Conservation objections – concerns about preserving the architectural and historical integrity of our neighbourhood.

I think it's important to state at the outset that we live in a house that benefits from a mansard roof. It's not one we created, it was there when we arrived 18 years ago. It was very cleverly done by whoever did it because it is completely hidden by the original front fascia wall of our house. It's not visible at all as you face the house at street level – and barely noticeable sideways on.

I'd like to say too that I'm not against mansards roofs as such. There are instances where they make good sense both practically and aesthetically. I don't, however, believe it's right to add one to No 5 Mornington Place.

#### **1 How would the mansard would affect us**

This photo was taken from one of the bedroom windows of our house. No 5 Mornington place is marked by the arrow. (We do have another window 2m to right of the one this was taken from which faces the mansard more directly. Unfortunately, I don't have a picture taken from that window to hand and in my haste to submit these comments, am unable to take one.)



In the planning statement the applicant writes:

‘The mansard would not provide for any greater level of overlooking than what exists at present’.

We don’t agree with this assertion. As you’ll see from the photograph, we live in the house to the rear of No.5 Mornington Place that sits adjacent to it. We have two top floor windows which aren’t shown in the architect’s visualisation. The proposed roof extension would create views for its occupants directly into a bedroom less than 8m away. We would clearly be more ‘overlooked’ by the development and our privacy adversely affected.

The extension would mean that our views south over the city would be compromised and we’d lose light from the rooms in the top of the house. Most sad of all though is that the south facing profile view of the valley roofs would, in our view, be ruined forever, not just for us, but to the immediate neighbourhood. That profile, which is visible a block away through the gardens on Mornington St. would be totally dominated by the new mansard.

Our small but much-loved garden would also be directly overlooked by the windows of the new mansard. (We currently have a wall around our rear garden which offers us privacy from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the neighbouring terraces, but wouldn’t offer privacy from a mansard-level viewpoint).

Of greater concern to us though, is the shadow the new mansard would cast over our garden and the loss of sunlight. I gather Camden’s guidance is for developers to seek to preserve their neighbours’ access to daylight and sunlight. I’m afraid this guidance has been overlooked in respect of our home and that of our neighbours.

## **2 Conservation concerns**

The proposed mansard is of a scale and style that just does not make sense for what the developers themselves describe as a ‘modest’ terrace. The new mansard is imposing, feels inappropriately grandiose, and would change the unique character of the terrace.

Contrary to what is said in the planning statement the proposed mansard would be highly visible at street level and in our view totally out of proportion with its surroundings. We believe the ‘party walls’ are unsightly, particularly viewed sideways on.

At a detailed level, the dormer windows (both front and back) protrude far too much, and are out of proportion and alignment with what’s going on aesthetically below.

There’s a co-ordinated aesthetic to the presentation of the five houses on the terrace and it’s clear that in their conception and design they were once considered as a whole. In our view, the new structure would detract from the integrity of that aesthetic.

It's true, as the applicant points out, there are a lot of mansards in our area, but they are mostly across complete terraces. The mansard being proposed here, would be the only one, bang in the middle of a row of houses that don't have mansards and have remained largely unaltered since they were built in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. In our view it would stick out like a sore thumb.

### **Six Reasons this application runs counter to Camden's Planning Guidance:**

In the planning statement the developer says 'The proposed mansard roof extension has been designed with this [Camden's] guidance in mind'. It's hard to see how.

The guidance sets out a number of circumstances in which a roof extension would **NOT** be acceptable. The proposed mansard fails in respect of most of them:

#### **Circumstance 1:**

*'There is an unbroken run of valley roofs'*

It's a fact that there is an unbroken run of five valley roofs in this instance and the proposed development would sit right in the middle of them. The valley roofs form part of the modest character of the terrace.

#### **Circumstance 2:**

*'Complete terraces or groups of buildings have a roof line that is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions.'*

No 5 Mornington Place is part of a group of five buildings that is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions.

It's true that what used to be the pub on the end of Mornington Place has a mansard. That building, however, is of a completely different style and scale to the one being considered here. In my view, that mansard works and is acceptable because it's well concealed and is visually aligned with the long row of mansards along Mornington Terrace.

In the aerial photograph provided in the planning statement there is another house on Mornington Place (on the south side of the junction with Albert St) that is marked as having a mansard. This actually is technically not true. That property is a newbuild, I believe constructed in the 1990s.

#### **Circumstance 3:**

*'A building is already higher than neighbouring properties where an additional storey would add significantly to the bulk or unbalance the architectural composition'.*

5 Mornington Place is actually already higher than neighbouring properties. When they built this little terrace the easiest thing to do would have been to make all of the houses the same. They didn't. To add visual interest, they gave No 5 slightly larger proportions and characterful colonnades. This makes it the visual centrepiece of the terrace, flanked as it is by two smaller houses. It's a really subtle, sensitive gesture by the creators of the original terrace, which really adds to its beauty. An extra storey would undoubtedly unbalance and add significantly to the bulk of the architectural composition.

**Circumstance 4:**

*'The building is designed as a complete composition where its architectural style would be undermined by any addition at roof level'*

The building itself and the terrace it sits in are both in themselves complete compositions. It is unarguable that those compositions would not be undermined by the proposed extension.

**Circumstance 5:**

*'Buildings are part of a group where differing heights add visual interest and where a roof extension would detract from this variety of form;'*

Please see my comment under circumstance 3. There is definitely a very pleasing variety of form to the group of terraced houses that No 5 Mornington Place lies in the centre of and the proposed extension would detract from that.

**Circumstance 6:**

*'Where the scale and proportions of the building would be overwhelmed by additional extension'.*

The proposed extension adds approximately one-third again to the visible height of the building. This is bound have an overwhelming effect on the scale and proportion of the building – and that of neighbouring properties.

Thank you again for offering us the opportunity to comment on this.

Iain Roe

Edward Hutton